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ABSTRACT

Using a question and answer format, this report provides answers to a wide variety of questions and requests about National Library Service policies and procedures, planning and development, reading materials, equipment, and publication services of concern to librarians serving these user groups. Questions directed to guest speakers and panelists about using volunteers and a proposed nonautomated circulation system are answered in the first two appendices. The third contains a resolution adopted by conference participants extending appreciation to Blanca J. Lastrapes of the Louisiana State Library for her contributions to handicapped persons, and the fourth presents two announcements by participants. (RAA)

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REPORT

ON QUESTIONS RAISED AND REQUESTS MADE AT

THE 1980 NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF LIBRARIANS SERVING BLIND AND PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED READERS

Prepared by the Staff of the
National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped
Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
April 1981

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POLICY AND PROCEDURES

NLS Consultant Program

Q. How does the NLS consultant program operate?

A. The Network Division coordinates the NLS consultant program. Supervisory staff members are assigned to consult with libraries in specific geographic regions of the cooperative network. The consultants foster communication between NLS and the network libraries and the sharing of ideas and programs among libraries. Consultants serve as initial contacts if librarians do not know the appropriate NLS person or office to call; consultants also may act as liaison between the network libraries and other NLS units. Consultants respond to requests for professional advice concerning all aspects of library service generally and NLS programs specifically. The consultants communicate with the regions by letter, by telephone, in meetings, and through personal visits to regional libraries and multistate centers.

NLS has a public responsibility to ensure that the materials produced reach blind and physically handicapped readers and meet their needs. Information about the effectiveness of network libraries, obtained through this consultant program, is especially important for program planning.

Standards approved by the American Library Association (ALA) represent a collective professional view of desirable service provisions and provide a uniform base for comparative assessment of network libraries. The annual reference survey gathers quantitative data about the status of network libraries in relation to the ALA standards, but consultant visits are necessary to develop a full picture of library performance. (See Network Bulletin No. 69i, dated August 25, 1980, which describes specific staff assignments by region.) NLS hopes at some future date to have four full-time consultants; progress toward this goal was made in FY 1980 when the first full-time consultant position was created.

Q. Network librarians should be encouraged and enabled (a) to act as consultants, paid by NLS, and (b) to serve as consultants to other network libraries. There is expertise in the network that perhaps is not available at NLS.

A. We will give that idea serious consideration; if it is feasible, we will undertake to implement it.

Contract Projects

Q. NLS uses contract help for various projects. Could network staff also be used and paid for contract projects?

A. NLS is exploring the best method to accomplish this. A step in this direction is the contractor's use of the Advisory Board to survey the degree to which the network is meeting the ALA standards. Additional ways of including network librarians in performance of contracts are being considered.

Staff Exchanges

Q. The Southern Conference encourages staff exchanges between NLS staff and regional and subregional libraries.

A. Mr. Cylke initiated this idea two years ago, and we are pursuing it. The Office of Personnel Management has not yet issued regulations on it, however, and we cannot implement it until the regulations are distributed.

ALA Standards Review: Ad Hoc Committee

Q. At the last biennial meeting, when Katherine Prescott, chairman of the ALA committee to draft standards, presented the overall draft, libraries were encouraged not to raise too many objections or to ask for too many changes because of the lengthy approval process at ALA.

The document that was approved was understood to be a working document that we could change later as needed.

ALA standards for libraries for the blind and physically handicapped as they relate to the weeding of books should be rejected.

A. Standards of Service for the Library of Congress Network of Libraries for the Blind and Physically Handicapped were developed by a representative committee of ALA members, subject to professional and user review, approved by the Board of Directors, Association of Specialized and Cooperative Library Agencies, and accepted by the Standards Committee, ALA.

An Ad Hoc Committee on Standards Review for Library Service to the Blind and Physically Handicapped has now been established to monitor and revise the standards. Any librarian wishing to suggest changes should direct them to Ms. Katherine Jackson, Chairman, ASCLA/ALA Standards Review Committee, Reference Division, Texas A & M University Library, College Station, Texas 77843.

Participation on Advisory Board

Q. Will regional librarians, one from each of the four conferences, play meaningful roles in the contract being let to assess the success of each library in meeting ALA standards?

A. The Advisory Board, established as part of the contract and used for review and approval throughout the project, includes representatives from consumer, network, and professional groups. Four members represent the four regional conferences; specific individuals to serve are designated by those conferences.

NLS Consumer Relations Section

Q. What is the Consumer Relations Section?

A. NLS has established a Consumer Relations Section to improve participation of individual readers and organized reader groups in developing our program and products. (See the NLS organization chart distributed June 22, 1980.)

The section will ensure that systematic consumer input is established and maintained. As of February 1981, recruitment of a person to head the section was under way.

Q. Will NLS solicit and incorporate regional librarian comments and suggestions during development of the Consumer Relations Section?

A. Suggestions about the best way to solicit and use consumer comments are welcome at any time. NLS plans to appoint to the staff during 1981 a person who will be responsible for soliciting and incorporating comments regarding the NLS program from all concerned sources, including network libraries.

NLS Involvement in Radio Reading Services

Q. What is NLS involvement in radio reading services?

A. The NLS enabling legislation contains no statement on this matter. We have assured those concerned that we would continue to cooperate in the most appropriate way.

Q. Is there a possibility that NLS can produce a document addressing the legal implications of regional library involvement in radio reading services? There are some gray areas and a study or position paper would be very helpful.

A. Since regional libraries' involvement in radio reading services would be governed by state and local laws and regulations, each regional library should individually explore the legal implications. NLS has cooperated with radio reading services in every appropriate way, encouraging and advising them in administrative and programming matters. At the April 1981 annual meeting of radio reading services in Oklahoma City, the Director of NLS is presenting a paper which will be made available to the network.

Q. The Northern Conference expresses its satisfaction that cooperation exists between network libraries and radio reading services. Although federal legislation has indicated that radio reading services will be a part of services to the handicapped, and although ALA has also gone on record as saying that radio reading services should be considered a library service, at this time NLS should not be involved in these services. If, when radio reading services started five or six years ago, legal responsibility had been placed on NLS to be involved, the issue would be different.

The Southern Conference felt a strong obligation to work very closely with radio reading services in its areas, but at this point would be reluctant to take on the distribution of receivers for this service.

The Midlands Conference expressed a general feeling that radio is a format for providing library service that is no different from cassette or braille or disc. It is a format for reading. It is not a service unto itself, but part of network library territory. Current information is just as much a right for the blind and physically handicapped, as part of library service, as it is for the ablebodied person who goes to the library to read a local newspaper.

NLS should continue to explore and to attempt to define relationships with radio reading services. Could NLS produce a document addressed to the legal implications of network or NLS involvement in radio reading services?

The technology that could make a record player could also accommodate a capacity for radio. A position paper, with legal quotations, would be very helpful to us.

A. NLS views radio reading services as a vital part of the information transfer process. NLS has supported these services through staff participation in planning, supply of production materials, guidance in programming, and promotion.

NLS involvement beyond these areas is impractical unless the public law is changed. NLS must expand its efforts to improve book and periodical production and service before expanding into a peripheral activity. The NLS network currently services less than 30 percent of eligible readers.

Eligibility Criteria for Learning Disabled Persons

Q. We need clarification of certifying authorities for young adults and for adults with learning disabilities.

A. The Federal Register for June 7, 1974, contains the current federal regulation for the definition of eligibility criteria and competent authority for certification under which NLS is operating. To be certified as eligible under this regulation, persons must have a reading disability "from organic dysfunction of sufficient severity to prevent their reading printed material in a normal manner." The competent authorities to so certify persons with a reading disability are defined as "doctors of medicine who may consult with colleagues in associated disciplines." Recognizing that network libraries find it hard to apply this regulation, NLS is now exploring the legal, statutory, and practical ramifications of modifying the regulation. Questions about the regulation and its application should be directed to the Chief of the Network Division.

Service Expansion to Mentally Retarded Persons

Q. NLS should get the law changed to include service to the mentally retarded.

A. As a federal government agency, NLS is not permitted to lobby for legislation, so NLS may not attempt to get the law changed to include service to the mentally retarded.

Local Production of Federal Government Documents

Q. Is there a form for network libraries to use in reporting to NLS the local production of government documents, so the network might share resources?

A. A standard form is being developed for use by network libraries. To build this data base, we will survey all network libraries for locally produced federal government documents. After the basic data are developed, we will depend on libraries to report voluntarily and thus to keep the data base current and accurate. The information will be available to the network.

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

User/Nonuser Survey Findings

Q. In compiling the user survey, has NLS made any comparison with a state to determine how many people who can use regular library service are actually library card holders and are using those services? Is NLS going to compare blind and physically handicapped readers in any way with the general reading public or is this a projection to be made by the local library for the blind and physically handicapped?

A. The sampling was too small for state by state comparison. Public library use was not a part of this study. Demographic information is compared against U.S. population as a whole but no attempt was made to compare blind and physically handicapped readers with the general reading public.

Q. According to the nonuser survey, what reasons do former users give for leaving the program?

A. Findings about former users are scattered throughout the executive summary, but the highlights are these: Three-fourths of the former users have fundamental changes in lifestyle, health, or attitude toward reading or toward the program; of nonusers dissatisfied with the program, half give the same reasons as users who are dissatisfied. This means corrective actions are possible. One-third are interested in trying the program again.

Q. Can the statistical results of the user and nonuser surveys be broken down into geographical areas, comparable, say, to the multistate service areas? I think there may be some regional differences.

A. User Survey: In addition to regional comparisons, we now wish we could have learned of any differences between the metropolitan and non-metropolitan populations, but it is too late to make these category changes because the information was not coded that way.

Data can be retrieved by the regional or subregional library categories. But in terms of retrieving by metropolitan, non-metropolitan, or the region of the country, that cannot be done.

Nonuser Survey: Some regional differences are evident, but are statistically insignificant in most cases. The major differences are not significant from the national differences. They are listed in the tables accompanying the report.

The whole report will be available in the ERIC system. Network libraries will receive appropriate sections of the report.

Cooperation with Academic Institutions

Q. Staff at academic institutions need help from network libraries in obtaining a variety of services for their students. How should this cooperation be solicited?

A. NLS encourages network agencies to respond positively to queries from academic institutions that require reading material for students. Agencies can (a) refer institutions to other agencies that can provide books not produced by NLS, (b) develop a cadre of volunteers who can transcribe to braille or record text material, and (c) pursue with local and state agencies the free use of aids such as Optacon readers or Kurzweil readers. The Network Consultant strongly recommends that successful programs of cooperation be reported to NLS for sharing through NLS News and other appropriate publications.

Reevaluation of Multistate Centers

Q. The Northern Conference recommends that the collections at the multistate centers be reevaluated to determine how they can provide better back-up service to the regionals. At present the multistate centers seem to be housing collections with the same strengths and weaknesses as most network libraries.

A. Because multistate center collections have been created from excess copies supplied by regional libraries, the older MSC collections of necessity reflect the strengths and weaknesses of most network libraries. The reason the MSCs are now shelving multiple copies of the newly issued books (which network libraries also have in abundance) is that these new books will become the older collections of tomorrow and our aim is to have an adequate supply of books in good condition (not worn out from multiple circulations by network libraries) for future interlibrary loan to readers. This is especially important for disc and braille collections. For cassettes, MSCs are concentrating on developing a high-quality and complete master collection for duplication on demand.

NLS Archival Responsibilities

Q. The Northern Conference recommends that archival responsibilities be shifted from regional libraries to multistate centers.

A. Neither regional libraries nor multistate centers have archival responsibilities. NLS has accepted that responsibility. Although we do not have an "archive" in the true sense (e.g., uncirculated copies in pristine condition of every title ever issued), NLS is in the process of creating a modified archive collection for future reference and historical purposes. The collection will include one copy of every title issued that is still available. These copies are being separately marked and housed and will not circulate, although cassette copies could be made when absolutely necessary from disc or cassette titles in the archive. For example, this archive collection will include one copy of every CB even after that collection has finally been reissued and declared obsolete.

Multistate center collections aim to contain multiple copies of all books in currently available NLS collections, as represented by the microfiche catalog. They want to have enough copies on hand to serve as back-up interlibrary sources for regional libraries. MSC collections are not archives, so MSCs will not retain MTs nor RCAs now that these collections are obsolete.

Regional libraries are asked to maintain only circulating collections--single or multiple copies of titles--in quantities sufficient to meet reader needs over an extended period of time.

Subregional Library Service

Q. We need an additional forum to discuss concerns related to subregional library service. Subregional libraries, especially the patron-oriented ones that have special programs, should do more sharing of information. I have gotten many ideas this week; I think meeting every two years is just not enough. Also, subregional libraries have different philosophies of service.

A. The Network Consultant is aware of the benefits from interaction among the directors of subregional libraries. Workshops and seminars are nearly impossible to arrange, however, because there are so many directors and they are so widely scattered. We plan to issue a discussion paper--based on submissions from subregional librarians--that will (a) address goals and objectives common to subregionals and (b) present examples of specific programs that have proved successful in meeting the objectives. Work on the document should be completed during FY 1981.

Q. Is NLS collecting any statistics to show that subregional libraries are more effective in attracting new readers and providing better service than regional libraries?

A. Some information is being collected, but it is not sufficient to answer the question. The Network Consultant will address this need during FY 1981 and begin to develop an instrument for collecting data.

Publicizing Resources

Q. There are approximately 3,000 BRA titles at the Multistate Center for the Midlands. Fewer than 300 of those have been publicized in Braille Book Review. Why are these resources sitting in MSCM? Why are they not being used? What can NLS do to publicize these resources or what can the regional libraries do to publicize these resources?

A. All BRA titles are listed in the microfiche catalog to enable readers' advisers in braille lending libraries to select additional braille titles for readers. NLS is exploring ways to supplement the current practice of announcing BRAs in Braille Book Review.

Midlands Braille Service Task Force

Q. The Midlands Conference has established a task force to look into braille service in the Midlands and see if recommendations are needed on ways that regional libraries could cooperate more fully in the provision of braille service and whether there are implications for the multistate center.

A. When considering braille service, the task force should work closely with The American Council of the Blind and The National Federation of the Blind. Multistate center implications should be coordinated with NLS. All appropriate NLS sections are available to the task force for consultation.

Multistate Center Directors' Annual Meeting

Q. When NLS conducts the annual meeting of the multistate center directors, the consumers of the multistate centers, that is, the network libraries, should also be represented.

A. The annual multistate center directors' meeting appears to work best when kept to a small working group between NLS as the contractor and the MSC directors. NLS recognizes, however, that consumer interaction with the MSC directors is important and requires MSC directors to attend each biennial national conference and the appropriate regional conferences in the alternate years. NLS also acknowledges the need for and supports increased input from MSC users, in addition to the informal input now received and encouraged. The network division chief who is the contract monitor for the four multistate centers plans to seek this input in several ways, including requesting a confidential annual report from each regional network agency concerning the quality of service received, problems encountered, suggestions and other comments, prior to one of the semiannual contract evaluation visits. Also in advance of the annual multistate center directors' meeting, all network agencies will be offered an opportunity, by network bulletin, to comment on problems with MSCs, suggested services, and other matters that should be discussed at the directors' meeting. Network agencies are also encouraged to contact the chief of the network division any time necessary by telephone or letter to discuss their multistate center concerns.

READING MATERIALS

Books and Magazines

Excess Book Procedures

Q. The problem of excess copies of books needs to be addressed. Excess lists are considered to be a time-consuming and very ineffective procedure. We recommend that the excess procedure be completely abolished.

A. NLS recognizes that the former excess procedures caused many problems. Reviewing many excess lists which were randomly received during the year and which contained only book numbers consumed costly employee hours. Learning that items requested after careful review of book collections are no longer available caused frustration. Nevertheless, NLS is required by federal law and regulation to ensure that all materials purchased with federal funds are fully utilized before disposal procedures are initiated. Furthermore, each network library that has accepted the responsibility for handling these federally funded materials is also responsible for ensuring that the materials are not needed by other libraries before disposal. Thus, each network library must follow some excess procedures.

NLS recommends annual weeding of extra copies of older and lesser used titles to avoid creating unmanageable collections. Experience has demonstrated that some libraries still need a substantial proportion of the books that have been labeled excess. The value of the books amounts to hundreds of thousands of dollars annually, thus making a book exchange system worthwhile. With the assistance of the Automated Systems Coordinator, the Network Division has therefore developed a revised excess

system, dubbed XESS, which simplifies and speeds the exchange of excess information and books among libraries through the use of automated techniques. To date, two cycles of XESS have been completed with great success. Future plans are to run two cycles of XESS annually, with excess lists due at NLS from the Western and Southern libraries by March 31 and from Northern and Midlands libraries by September 30. A consolidated excess list will be duplicated on address cards for mailing labels with disposal lists for titles not needed by other libraries. In the future, these should be available within two or three months after NLS receives the excess lists

Q. What other procedures relate to XESS?

A. In supplying excess information or making requests concerning this program, please do not be inventive. The keypunch operators handle thousands of documents, and they do not know what to do with your odd notes. We have to go through every list and cross out extraneous items. In addition, please do not list parts of books separately; list only the basic book number (not the "A" or "B," or "1" or "2").

We expect to learn how many copies of each book have been requested, whether all requests could be filled, and whether these requests can be filled from NLS or MSC stock.

We will work to find other ways to satisfy those large demands we really could not measure before. We continue to learn new things and to find new ways to handle data.

Q. Would it be possible for us to take extra copies of books off the shelf and send them to multistate centers without going through the XESS system?

A. The centers are bulging; they have no way to manage the workload. NLS knows that regional libraries are bulging too, and that you need to get the unneeded books off your shelves as quickly as possible. NLS urges you to participate in the next XESS cycle.

Quotas for Titles

Q. Many libraries that are short of space have weeded surplus titles, and then discovered that the titles were included in the next biennial catalog. This listing creates a demand the library cannot meet.

Has NLS done any studies since the time Jim Hahn told us that if a book is on a long bibliography you only need two copies, and on a short bibliography you need five?

A. Titles announced in TBT and BBR are, by policy, included in biennial catalogs. Copies should be retained to meet the resulting demand.

If the question is whether NLS has done any studies to determine how many copies a particular library will need to meet the demand, the answer is no. Network libraries vary so widely in size and constituency that each would need to establish its own rule of thumb. But if the question is whether NLS has established the minimum number of copies to be located

before listing a book in a bibliography, those quotas are much higher than the ones you mention.

In response to problems that network libraries experienced with the listing of older titles (TBs, CBs), we have altogether eliminated these titles from mass-produced bibliographies mailed to readers, no matter how many copies we can find. Quotas for RDs and RCs vary according to the subject of the bibliography, but the standard number is five copies on the shelf at each multistate center. This number reflects only the reserve supply of a title, not the basic number available. Quotas for braille are lower.

Proposed Option to Retain Withdrawn Titles

Q. The Northern Conference objects to titles being withdrawn from the collection because they are no longer of interest to the majority of readers. We recommend that only nonfiction titles which include outdated information (science, geography, health, etc.) and books in poor physical condition be subject to withdrawal. Network libraries should have the option of retaining withdrawn titles.

A. The Collection Development Section (CDS) concurs and is following this guideline. CDS has recommended in the past and continues to recommend that network libraries have the option of retaining withdrawn titles.

Replacement of Outdated Nonfiction Titles

Q. Because the NLS nonfiction collection tends to be weak, the Northern Conference recommended that, to eliminate the diminution of holdings in any subject area, withdrawn titles be replaced by new and relevant material in that same area.

A. CDS is seeking to replace outdated nonfiction titles. This activity along with the strengthening of nonfiction holding in general will be more specifically addressed in the formulation of the proposed Collection Building Policy to be formulated by 1982. The Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Collection Development Activities will be called upon to help develop this policy. Network libraries are encouraged to work with their Ad Hoc Group representatives to help CDS.

Cassette Book Excess Procedures

Q. I understand the excess list process for the talking books. Does the same process prevail for cassette books as well, or do we have to hold on to those?

A. Cassette books should also be put on XESS lists, so all network libraries have at least one opportunity to select these. As soon as we can demonstrate that books are not needed, the Network Services Section will give instructions to dispose of them.

In designing the XESS system, we had to examine whether we could recycle the cassettes. Henry Paris, CMDD, and his staff weighed the cost of reusing the cassettes against the cost of quality control programs and found that it costs more to try to reuse individual cassettes than it does to start from scratch.

Taping over a recorded book creates real quality problems, so the decision was made to dispose of the cassette cartridges after excess procedures have been followed.

Obtain mailing labels from Sam Bryant, Supervisor, Materials Management Unit, to send the cassettes for disposal.

Withdrawal of TB and CB Collections

Q. The TB and CB collections should be withdrawn from network library holdings. The multistate centers should be the depository for circulating titles and copies withdrawn from regional collections. They should procure sufficient numbers of usable copies of these titles before they are discarded nationally.

A. The entire CB collection has been examined and is being processed for conversion to RC. Many have already been reissued. A detailed report on the status of the CB collection should be forthcoming from the NLS Collection Development Section before the end of 1981. NLS hopes to declare this collection obsolete with the release of this report. Instructions regarding withdrawal of titles from circulation will also be provided at that time.

At the same time, the NLS Collection Development Section is systematically reviewing all titles in the TB collection for reissue or withdrawal. There are 4,820 titles in the TB collection; of these about 1,370 have been or are being reissued and need not be retained by regional libraries. The others are being reviewed and processed as quickly as possible; however, the process is long and complex and it will be some time before the whole TB collection can be declared obsolete. In the meantime, experience shows that many readers are still very interested in reading the older TB titles. Thus it is advantageous for regional libraries to retain at least one copy of each TB to handle reader requests until it is reissued as an RD or RC. Multiple copies need not be retained (except for the more popular titles), since libraries can rely on the multistate centers for interlibrary loan of additional copies. It is not possible for the multistate centers to provide an interlibrary loan for all TBs at this time.

National Storage Center for Nondiscardable Excess Copies

Q. Participating libraries should have the option to weed as necessary. It is the understanding of Northern Conference network librarians that they have met the qualifications for disposal of federal materials in their regions after they have met all circulation requests. As the ultimate responsibility for all items issued for the national program rests with NLS, we urge that a procedure for national storage of nondiscardable excess copies be established. The sending of surplus lists from multistate centers to network libraries should be reexamined. Items that are surplus at multistate centers as a result of a change in network demand should not be offered to participating libraries as gifts.

A. NLS has explored the Northern Conference recommendation for establishment of a national storage center of nondiscardable excess copies; no funding is available for this, nor is it politically or practically feasible. Thus NLS and network libraries must follow required federal disposal procedures.

NLS is striving through the XESS program to make redistribution and disposal procedures as simple and speedy as possible. The system seems to be working very well. XESS has replaced the old book exchange program and multistate centers are no longer sending excess lists to network libraries.

Q. Cumulative circulation statistics from automated network libraries could provide an index for the weeding of excess copies of titles of diminishing interest.

A. We are much interested in this possibility but have been unable to formulate the type of cumulated report that would be both useful and feasible. Differences among automated circulation systems work against any automatic circulation; circulation (or request) data for a title are affected by the passage of time; some circulation results from the patron's request and some from the reader advisor's choice; class of book is more important than individual titles, but there is no agreement as yet as to class; etc. We continue to seek ways to use these resources, but so far have seen no practical method. Simple listings of books and their requests or circulations have been tried and are ineffective. Suggestions are welcome.

Regional Library Weeding Standards

Q. When it comes to a weeding policy, NLS requires that one copy of each book should stay in every regional library. When the ALA standards are enforced, it is hoped that the standard calling for regional libraries to have adequate space is as rigidly enforced as the standard for regional libraries to have one copy of everything.

A. The ALA Standards of Service do require regional libraries to retain "... a minimum of one copy of each title in each of the recorded formats (CB, RC, TB, RD)" 4.2.7.3.2, p. 38. The "Book Exchange and Redistribution Procedures," in the Regional Library Manual, VII. I. A.1, states that "regional libraries are required to maintain at least one copy of each nationally distributed TB, RD, CB, and RC." To maintain these collections, it is certainly understood that adequate space and shelving are required. NLS will help in every way possible to ensure that such space and shelving are available to regional libraries to meet reader needs.

Reissue Lists

Q. The Northern Conference applauds the forthcoming reissue lists. They will provide needed information and help alleviate some storage problems. We urge that these lists be continuously updated.

A. CDS will make every effort to provide updates for the reissue lists through Network Bulletins or through the microfiche catalog if that proves feasible.

Appeals for More Titles

Q. NLS should make an effort to produce more titles and fewer copies per title based on network experience. With more titles available, reader demand is spread out and copy allotments would be reduced.

A. NLS has established its FY 1981 book production plan based on a total number of copies. If network libraries select fewer copies through the copy allotment system, more titles will be produced; if they select more copies, fewer titles will be produced.

Q. The Southern Conference felt that even though the inclusion of 200 additional cassette titles, which would be over and above this year's number, might mean that libraries would have to take fewer copies of cassettes for other titles across the board, we would like to have those additional titles available for our patrons.

A. We appreciate the comment, and your responses to this question on our annual reference survey.

Q. NLS should add more titles that appeal to boys and decrease the selection of female-oriented titles, which seemed to be predominately series.

A. CDS is attempting to follow this guideline as has been recommended.

Cassettes for Young Readers

Q. NLS should produce more titles for very young readers on cassette. NLS should change its production format for early childhood material to produce a greater proportion of titles on cassette than on the disc.

A. In 1977, the Ad Hoc Advisory Group discussed the question of serving very young readers and weighed the merits of using cassettes versus discs for preschool through third grade readers. Subsequently, to get a consensus on what the NLS policy should be, the network was polled. The report of the survey with NLS responses was provided to the network as Network Bulletin No. 440, October 12, 1978.

In regard to providing more preschool materials, CDS reaffirms its position: Efforts will continue to identify and include in the collection materials appropriate for four- through six-year-old children. Material aimed at preschool children age three and younger either does not lend itself to reproduction, is inappropriate for the collection, or is available commercially.

In regard to providing very young readers with titles on cassettes versus discs, network libraries are encouraged to provide their Ad Hoc Advisory Group representatives with solid data to support their views so that the question may be reopened and CDS can review its position.

Automation

Number of Readers Served

Q. How many readers are served by automated systems?

A. Approximately 40 percent of the readership is now being served this way.

Automation Problems in Magazine Circulation

Q. When NLS writes the program for magazine circulation, will automated libraries be considered so that additional expense will not be incurred trying to interface their programs with NLS's program?

A. That is the intention. Not all automated systems keep track of magazines. For those that don't, not much can be done, but for those that do, everything practicable will be done.

Microfiche Color

Q. Can NLS use a color other than dark blue as the contrast color on the microfiche?

A. NLS changed from black to dark blue because of network requests. We will, however, consider this question when writing a new contract.

Design for Model Automated Circulation System

Q. NLS should design an automated circulation system that would include the essential elements NLS would advise for a library system.

A. Because automated circulation systems involve so many variables in hardware, software, and library procedures, no single system is representative. We have contracted with Cuadra Associates to develop a handbook (a) to provide the information librarians and computer personnel need to build systems to perform the functions they desire, or (b) to identify existing systems that can be copied or serve as models. The study addresses more uniform design of the data bases involved and the potential for telecommunications.

Regional Library Automation

Q. When will there be a product from the RFP for guides to automation of regional libraries?

A. The contract, awarded to Cuadra Associates, is for six months. The planning document should be available in late spring, 1981.

Computerized Mailing List Problems

Q. Are the mailing list transaction forms and the data entered into the computer compared in any way? Why are gross inputting errors not caught before libraries get the printout?

A. We make some spot checks, but we do not compare all input forms with the computer output.

There are some reasons why a name, for example, might be reversed in the system. If you enter a person's name but indicate on the form that the person is an organization, the name would be formatted wrong. It is very hard to catch all the mistakes, and we could not economically justify the level of quality control you are suggesting.

Q. If you submit a duplicate, will the computer reject it?

A. Mr. Grant (representing the mailing list contractor): The computer will reject an exact duplicate, but if there is any variation (you have a record for John Smith and you resubmit him as John J. Smith), the computer will give that person another ID. In a case that close, the ID would probably be identical to the first one except for the last character in the tie-breaking position.

You cannot add a subscriber using a permanent subscriber ID; the system will not accept an add transaction without a temporary ID. You can send in a change using a permanent ID and the system will accept the change. Again, if a transaction is a duplicate of an earlier transaction, (a Xerox of the first form or whatever), the system will reject it.

Q. We have had a case where a long-term reader had as many as three or four different ID's in the fiche. How does it happen that none of them has a subscription?

A. Subscriptions were not listed for some records picked up in the conversion. The thing to do in such a situation is to delete the extras and put in changes for the remaining subscription or record.

EQUIPMENT

Machines

Machine Carton Dating Numbers

Q. What is the purpose of dating every single number on a machine carton?

A. The dates inform us (a) whether the manufacturer has turned over to the post office the entire shipment; and (b) whether a shipment reaches you all at one time or in partial shipments.

Q. Wouldn't just writing a note that all machines were received on a certain date answer your question a lot better than stamping a date on every number?

A. NLS is required to have verification of the date received by each serial number on the certificate of mailing. This requirement is included in the procedures that were sent out in November 1978.

Machine Lending Agency Transfer Forms

Q. Do some sub-lending agencies use the machine transfer form?

A. That depends on whether a machine lending agency has sub-lending agencies, and what decision the machine lending agency (MLA) has made as to which agency is going to report the transfers. Either agency may report the transfers to NLS once a month, but NLS must receive reports for the whole state. It is up to the MLA to decide whether its sub-lending agencies report directly to NLS or to the MLA for consolidation on one transfer form for the area.

NLS has noted many problems with form no. 73-162, the Monthly List of Machine Transfers. NLS gets notices of transfers on all kinds of pieces of paper. The computer contractor handling the automated inventory will not accept anything if it is not listed on this form. If you do not have this form, please ask your multistate center for it. Also, please use it properly. There are two columns. If you are the reporting agency, your agency code should be written only at the bottom of the form. If you are receiving a transfer from another state, then you should list the model, the sending state's code, and the model and serial numbers in the "From" column. If you are transferring a machine to another library, it should be listed in the column that says "To." List a machine only in one column or the other, not both columns. If a machine is listed in both columns, the form is interpreted as reporting the equipment coming from one place and being transferred back to the same agency.

Another form that causes some problems is the Irregular Receipt Card. Please do not use the draft that was circulated in 1978; the correct form, no. 73-161, a three-by-five card, is available from MSCs. If you have a delayed receipt, you should place one copy of this card in your file, to remain there until the machine shows up or the model is declared obsolete. If the machine shows up later, you should fill out the bottom portion of the card and mail it to the ECO.

If you receive machines that are not supposed to be with your shipment and are not listed on the certificate of mailing, do not write in or add the serial number on the certificate of mailing, do not store the irregular stock, and do not assign the machines to readers. Note the unexpected receipt on an Irregular Receipt Card and send the card to NLS. The ECO will telephone and tell you what to do with that machine.

Q. Why did Connecticut have such a low error rate?

A. The lending agency had no turnover in staff responsible for equipment inventory and they have one staff member whose sole job is to handle equipment records. Also all procedures required by NLS have been followed.

Q. What is the purpose of dating each serial number on the certificate of mailing?

A. This requirement was established in 1978 to ensure conformity of reporting method among all machine lending agencies. If each agency acknowledges receipt by a different notation, it is impossible to know whether the agency is reporting receipt or nonreceipt.

Shelving Specifications

Q. Is NLS studying methods of shelving and types of shelving, in order to make available a list of options and recommendations?

A. Concurrently with MSC visits, the Knight Associates consulting team visited regional libraries in MSC cities, as well as at least two libraries in the Washington, D.C. area. Based on results of the survey and on existing NLS data, the team is to develop (a) standardized shelving configurations for small, medium, and large libraries; and (b) specifications for minimum quality and weight-load capacity of shelving needed.

Mailing Container Redesign

Q. Will the proposed redesign of the mailing containers be considered in light of the readers who may have difficulty in reversing the mailing labels?

A. Absolutely. Removal and reversal of the mailing label must be designed for ease of operation by the user. The most recent design change adds a small ramp and an enlarged finger cut-out for this purpose and appears to satisfy the requirement.

Q. Network library input should be sought on the design of new mailing containers.

A. MDD will provide several opportunities for network libraries to comment on the design of new mailing containers prior to making a final production commitment.

Q. Is NLS considering design of a two-cassette mailing container?

A. NLS will consider design of a two-cassette mailing container upon acceptance of the four-cassette design.

Disposal of Obsolete/Damaged Cassette Players

Q. My local Telephone Pioneers asked if they could have any obsolete or damaged-beyond-repair equipment, especially cassette players, so that they could use the batteries. Would this create any problems?

A. No problem at all. Obsolete machines may be salvaged for parts anytime.

Q. May the libraries erase incomplete cassettes and use them to duplicate another book that we want to send out?

A. A taped NLS book should not be reused because of quality problems. To obtain complete books, use your tape quota at multistate centers.

Cassette containers, however, can be reused. Remove the individual cassettes from the containers and send containers to AFB in New York for recycling.

PUBLICATION SERVICES

Information Exchange

Q. NLS News might try using a question column to which regional librarians could send questions. For example, they might ask which libraries in the network had an active program for younger readers, juvenile readers, in order to share information with those libraries. Questions would be printed in NLS News, but responses could go directly to the library with the question. That might be an effective new method of sharing information.

A. We are always delighted to receive network information for the network exchange column in NLS News.

Promotion of Library Service

Q. How can network libraries continue to promote their service even though additional new users will mean that the current level of service cannot be continued indefinitely? With less money coming in, state agencies will be lucky to maintain current levels in the next 1981-1983 biennium.

So while libraries are philosophically committed to informing the public, how far can we go?

A. The two major studies based on nonuser and user surveys, as well as the ALA standards, emphasize the importance of informing the public about services. Therefore, NLS will continue to advocate more effort in this area and offer network libraries appropriate educational materials.

In the past few years, public education projects in the network have resulted in a substantial number of new readers, but overall growth seems to be balanced by attrition. Where public education programs have generated exceptional demand, the libraries involved have adjusted, not abandoned, their education programs to maintain a manageable growth and demand for services. Obviously, every library in the network has to consider its own circumstance. Some libraries may be able to use readership increases positively to help maintain or to build budgets. Some libraries have been successful in obtaining grants for outreach programs that include providing staff to perform the outreach. Such support relieves regular library staff of much of the day-to-day work of public education, so that the staff's time and effort required to deliver ongoing patron services are not eroded.

Public Service Announcements

Q. Do you send public service announcements (PSAs) on video cassettes to TV stations?

A. PSAs are not provided on video because most stations do not use them that way. The TV spots are provided on 16-millimeter film on individual reels; the radio spots are on open reels. NLS packages the spots in plain jiffy

bags addressed to the stations involved. Network libraries should stamp their addresses on the packages and deliver or mail them to broadcasters in their areas. It is more effective for these materials to be from a local rather than from a Washington agency.

Q. Will libraries that participate in the public service announcement project also get the Washington Redskin spot?

A. Yes.

Grouping of Spanish Titles

Q. Can Spanish titles be grouped in issues of TBT, rather than interspersed with English titles?

A. Grouping Spanish titles in TBT is effective with the March-April 1981 issue.

APPENDIXES

Questions and comments directed to guest speakers and panelists who participated in the conference are included in Appendixes I and II. Appendix III contains a resolution adopted by conference participants. Appendix IV contains announcements.

APPENDIX I

VOLUNTEER RESOURCES

Q. The last workshop on volunteers emphasized that noncompensated overtime is volunteered work. Will your survey of volunteers pick up on that?

A. "No. We distinguish between paid staff members and persons who have no base salary, although we do have a category called 'paid volunteers.'" (Edwin Dowlin, Applied Management Sciences.)

Q. How many libraries have volunteers working as readers' advisers--positions that might normally be considered library staff jobs?

A. "There are some volunteers in staff positions. Please refer to the final report, distributed in the fall of 1980, for specific statistics.

"We did not use the term 'readers' adviser.' We tried to determine whether a person was advising patrons or simply reading Talking Book Topics to them. The final report will have more details." (Edwin Dowlin, Applied Management Sciences.)

Q. Information about volunteers doing jobs that the libraries should have paid staff doing could be harmful when discussing staff justifications with supervisors or budget people. Some libraries are using volunteers to do jobs the paid staff should be doing.

A. "Yes, some libraries are using volunteers in this way. In this study we reported the situation in national terms, but did not cite those libraries that are asking volunteers to do work that paid staff should be available to do. A review of the charts reveals specifics.

"Please be careful interpreting all charts; we accepted the responses of all persons responding to the question. Although respondents might have said they are advising, some may simply have been answering the telephone and then referring the matter to a staff member for further assistance. Others may have been prompting a selection system on a computer, which involved no professional decisions. Thus, I would not accept the statistics strictly at face value; the study will also make this point." (Edwin Dowlin, Applied Management Sciences.)

APPENDIX II

NONAUTOMATED CIRCULATION SYSTEM

Q. In the proposed nonautomated circulation system, why do you recommend that braille circulation be kept separate from the other formats?

A. "We think it would cause too much confusion to do it otherwise. The numeric book number codes that indicate cassettes and talking books (RC, RD, etc.) should be kept in one folder and the codes for BRA and BR in a separate folder because the same numbers could appear for different media.

"It would also be easier and more efficient to keep these records separate because there is limited space on the folder for recorded materials and for braille. All correspondence, however, is integrated in the patron file; braille circulation folders are kept in alphabetical order with the rest of recorded circulation files." (Ann Walker, Battelle.)

Q. Does indicating both disc and cassette requests on the same folder make it more confusing to select books? Is it difficult to know the number you are looking for?

When you pull book cards, what kind of problems do you encounter? How do you deal with envelopes that come in with no cards?

A. "When you record a patron's request, we recommend that you put down a C for cassette or a D for disc and then the number, so that you know that the person requested the book in that particular format. Patrons do express preferences for the format they wish to receive.

"As for books coming back without book cards, regional libraries that are testing the system have not reported this to be a problem. Extra book cards are available from the Materials Management Unit, NLS." (Ann Walker, Battelle.)

Q. Could the cards get mixed up?

A. "In the proposed system, the book cards and envelopes are to be separated by the circulation staff, not by staff who check in the mail. Cards and envelopes are to be pulled from the book container and given to the circulation staff for book check-in." (Ann Walker, Battelle.)

Q. What if the reader does not put the card back in the book?

A. "Patrons must be educated to put the cards back in with the envelopes." (Ann Walker, Battelle.)

APPENDIX III

RESOLUTION: BLANCA J. LASTRAPES

The following resolution was passed by acclamation:

"Whereas Blanc J. Lastrapes became assistant to the head of the Department for the Blind at Louisiana State Library in 1960, and became head Librarian for the Blind and Physically Handicapped in 1969, and whereas she has increased the readership from less than 2,000 to more than 4,500 individual readers and 300 agencies, and whereas she has encouraged the expansion of the national Spanish language program, and whereas she has been an insistent voice crying for more and better services for all of the handicapped; therefore, be it resolved that the Southern Conference of Librarians for the Blind and Physically Handicapped applaud her dedication and accomplishments and extend our appreciation for her constant expression of the needs of the handicapped patrons of the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped."

APPENDIX IV

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Church and Synagogue Library Association

Q. Bruce Brown: The Church and Synagogue Library Association encourages network libraries to solicit their help whenever appropriate.

A. We appreciate the comment.

Southern Conference Meeting

Q. The next Southern Conference meeting will be held in Raleigh, North Carolina, in the spring of 1981. Anyone interested in attending is welcome.

A. Thank you. NLS staff will plan to attend.